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BIOWARE

THE SILENT GROVE

DAVID GAIDER | ALEXANDER FREED | CHAD HARDIN

DRAGON AGE™

THE SILENT GROVE

Part 5 of 6

For nearly a decade, King Alistair of Ferelden has ruled with a steady hand, seeing to his homeland's reconstruction after the darkspawn blight. Now—accompanied by the notorious pirate Isabela and the dwarven merchant Varric Tethras—he has journeyed north in search of his long-lost father, King Maric.

Confronting the witch Yavana about her involvement in Maric's fate, Alistair learned that Maric and Yavana had worked together to preserve the world's dying dragons. But Maric is now gone, and Yavana refuses to reveal what more she knows—and before Alistair could form a new plan, he was captured by former ally Prince Claudio Valisti of the Crow assassins . . .

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CHAPTER 5

YAVANA!

COME OUT OR SEND YOUR DAMNED *DRAGON* OUT!

I WOULDN'T GIVE HER IDEAS.

YOU!

WITCH!

ALISTAIR'S BEEN CAPTURED.

YOU NEED TO HELP US GET HIM *BACK*.

WHY WOULD I NEED TO INVOLVE MYSELF AT ALL?

BECAUSE THE PEOPLE WHO TOOK HIM ARE LOOKING FOR THIS...PLACE.

THEY ALREADY KNOW THE WAY, AND I EXPECT THEY WANT ALISTAIR AS A *SHIELD* AGAINST YOUR DRAGON.

THAT AND MORE, YES.

AND YOU'RE PLANNING TO, WHAT -- WAIT FOR THEM?

HARDLY YOUR CONCERN.

BESIDES, YOU CARE NOTHING FOR *MY* FATE.

SCREW THIS.

GET ON THE ROOF -- WE KNOW THEY'RE COMING, WE SET UP AN AMBUSH --

LET ME TRY.

I'VE MET YOUR MOTHER, AND I'VE MET MERCHANTS AND CON MEN WHO COULD FLEECE THE HORNS OFF A QUNARI.

I KNOW WHEN A PERSON WANTS TO STRIKE A DEAL.

KING MARIC MADE A BARGAIN, AND SO CAN WE.

NAME YOUR PRICE.

OH, CRUD.

WHAT?

NOT EVEN A BLOODSTAIN.

GO.

YOUR FRIEND NEEDS YOU.

YOU WILL DO YOUR PART.

GO.

YOU DIDN'T SAY WHAT YOU EXPECT IN RETURN.

HE'S NOT REALLY OUR *FRIEND*, YOU KNOW--

LET'S GET OUT WHILE WE CAN, SHALL WE?

...IF IT'S ANY COMFORT, I WAS *IMPRESSED* YOU CAME TO ANTIVA ALONE.

IT SHOWED *COURAGE*, IF NOT *INTELLECT*.

RIGHT-- BECAUSE YOU'RE THE *CLEVER* ONE.

YOU LURED ME ALL THE WAY OUT HERE TO GET INTO THAT GROVE?

I DID.

PITY YOU DIDN'T THINK TO JUST *KILL* THE DRAGON.

WE TOYED WITH THE NOTION OF *TRYING* --

-- BUT THAT BEAUTY IS WHY WE'RE INTERESTED.

WHEN YOU SAY "*WE*"...YOU'RE NOT TALKING ABOUT THE CROW ASSASSINS.

WE ALL HAVE OUR PATRONS.

PROVE MORE TOLERABLE THAN YOUR *FATHER*, AND I MAY EVEN TELL YOU ABOUT MINE.

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT MARIC?

WHAT *HAPPENED* AFTER HE CAME HERE?

THE DWARF!

FIND THE DWARF!

YOU WANTED ME ALIVE.

NOW YOU HAVE TO TRY TO KEEP ME.

THK!

BIANCA SAYS HELLO.

POOR CLAUDIO.

LUIS HAD THAT SAME CONFUSED LOOK.

IDIOTS!

MAINTAIN A PERIMETER!

YOU DON'T DESERVE TO SPEAK HIS *NAME.*

HE WAS *MY* HUSBAND, NOT YOURS.

PITY, TOO -- I'D HAVE LOVED TO SEE *YOU* LOCKED IN HIS *"EVENING GALLERY"* FOR A FEW DAYS.

DIDN'T I TELL YOU TO GO?

SO WHAT IF YOU DID?

YOU'RE NOT *MY* KING.

THEN WHEN HE ASKS YOU TO *ENTERTAIN* HIS FRIENDS, YOU DECIDE HE'S NOT *DOTING* ENOUGH?

IF YOU THOUGHT YOU WERE TOO GOOD FOR HIM, YOU SHOULD HAVE CRAWLED BACK TO THE SEWERS ON YOUR WEDDING DAY --

-- NOT BEDDED AND *BETRAYED* HIM TO BECOME WHORE OF THE EASTERN SHORE!

YOU WERE *LUCKY* TO BE LUIS'S PLAYTHING -- NO ONE ELSE WOULD HAVE LIFTED YOU OUT OF THAT *FILTH* YOU CALLED A HOME!

YOU'RE RIGHT -- I *SHOULD* HAVE.

I'VE CHANGED A LOT SINCE THEN.

TRYING TO TRADE UP, THEN?

LUIS COULD PAY FOR YOUR WINE AND YOUR *SILKS*, BUT THIS MAN COULD GIVE YOU A WHOLE *COUNTRY*.

STAY CLOSE AND SHOW SOME *FLESH*--

SHUT UP AND FIGHT.

ALWAYS THE HYPOCRITE.

HOW MANY NIGHTS DID YOU WEAR THAT SHY LITTLE SMILE, WHISPERING MEEKLY IN YOUR HUSBAND'S EAR?

LAST WORDS?

GHKK--

ALL RIGHT, THEN.

DON'T!

YOU KILLED HIM.

WELL, I DIDN'T LIKE HIM VERY MUCH.

I HADN'T NOTICED.

BUT HE HAD ANSWERS ABOUT MARIC.

I ASSURE YOU--

-- THE TRUTH IS NEVER OUT OF REACH.

IT'S TOO LATE NOW.

YOU BELIEVE SO?

TO BE CONCLUDED!

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